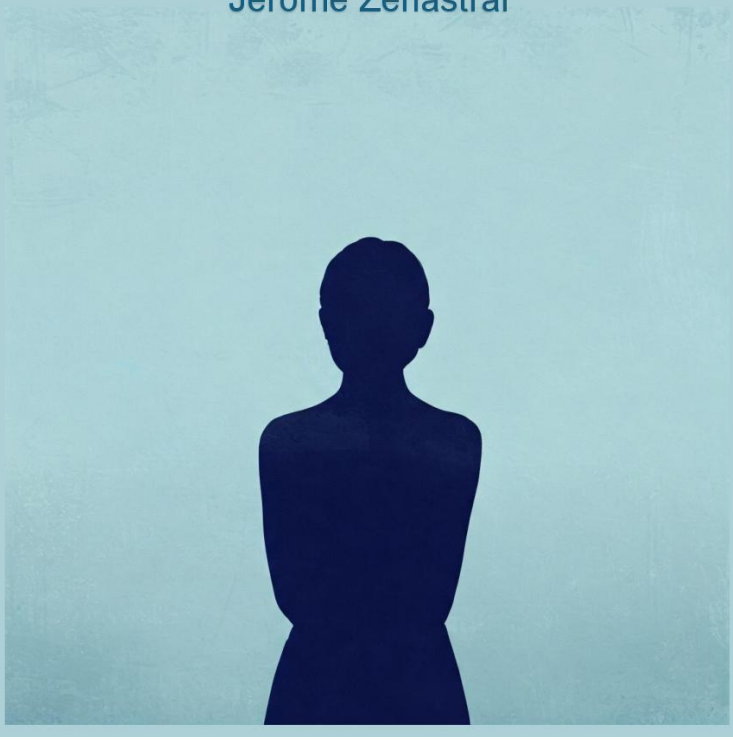
# The song of the moment

*Léonie's Journey*

Jérôme Zenastral



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## Preface

This book is an intimate journey, a subtle exploration of that often invisible path that leads to reconciliation with oneself—body, mind, presence. It rises like a song without expectation of an echo. It passes like a light breeze, without purpose or direction. It is not an adventure to be followed, but a stripping away. A letting go of landmarks, an offering to the moment.

It offers neither a guide nor a method. It invites us to welcome what is. To listen to what unfolds in the silence, in the breath, in the bare space of presence.

This story is a poetry of the moment, an echo of the silent quests we all carry within us. Sensuality is listening. Solitude is density. Love is essential presence.

Léonie surrenders to what is there. To the simplest. To the most naked. Sometimes luminous, sometimes pierced by pain, always alive. Her journey seeks nothing, because what she discovers will not be found tomorrow, nor elsewhere.

## The Echo of a Look

It was a Friday night like any other. Léonie was meeting her friends in the small bistro on the eleventh arrondissement, with its dim lighting and discreet hubbub. The walls seemed to hold the echo of old laughter. She was sitting at her usual table, a little rickety, the same one she'd had since her student days.

Glasses clinked, voices mingled. Life that evening seemed to float on a light veil.

Antoine was there, of course. Almost always. Present at the parties, the silences, the impromptu outings. A pillar of the group, without ever being its center. But tonight, in his eyes, something had changed. A new note. Imperceptible to the others. Léonie perceived it as something inexpressible that vibrated within her, silently, but intensely.

When he spoke to her, even through a trivial sentence, her heart accelerated without warning.

She didn't know if it was him who had changed, or if something had shifted inside her. A strange sensation was settling in—soft, warm, almost unsettling. With each meeting of their eyes, a warmth rose. Discreet, but real. It was neither excitement nor clear desire. It was fuzzier, older. As if a memory was trying to awaken in the folds of time.

She smiled, joined in the conversation, sometimes laughed, but everything inside her remained focused on this sensation. A barely audible tremor. She didn't want to interpret it. Or make a fuss about it. Just feel what it felt like. Let it be.

When she left the café later that night, the asphalt was wet with a light rain. Paris shone under the streetlights. She walked, and the moment she had experienced remained suspended within her, like a barely dissipated breath. Something still watched over their exchange—a silent, warm presence, which she carried like a secret. She moved forward, inhabited by the still-living echo of the evening. With each step, she seemed to want to preserve within herself the fragile trace of this encounter, as if her walking itself sought to prolong this moment so as not to let it fade away.

Antoine had awakened a spark, a call within, a discreet crack in the thickness of everyday life.

And for the first time in a long time, Léonie felt the beginnings of a return to herself.

## A Kairos named Antoine?

The days slipped by like leaves carried by a light wind. Paris was returning to its rhythm, and Léonie, swept away by the flow of her obligations, was returning to her routine.

Yet, at the turn of a silence, in the tumult of the subway or in the heart of a meeting, the echo of a glance returned. Not like a frozen memory, but like a light presence, a discreet insistence that sought to inscribe itself in the fabric of her daily life. What she had preserved that night had not dissipated. It watched, patient, silent.

She couldn't have said what it meant. It wasn't an obsession. More like an inner chant, a gentle, continuous, almost imperceptible vibration.

Antoine had always been there, a stable figure in their circle of friends. But since that evening, he seemed bathed in a new light.

She wondered. Not about him, but about that part of herself that his presence had brushed against. A part that had long remained dormant, buried beneath habits, the aligned hours of her job, the busy days when one forgets to exist in any way other than one's duties.

Something in her had awakened, an attention to gentleness, an openness, a new availability to the moment, to the looks, to the tenderness of the world.

She wasn't trying to make a story out of it. There was no script, no projections. Only this silent question: what if this were a kairos—one of those rare moments when time opens a breach, a possibility that can be seized... or let slip by?

When she saw him again, among the others, she watched discreetly. But Antoine remained true to himself, generous, funny, without distinguishing features. Nothing came to confirm or deny what she had perceived. This sometimes destabilized her. She doubted his perceptions, almost resented this sensitivity that she believed to be too keen.

But the trouble persisted. It hadn't crystallized into desire, not yet. It hovered like an uncertain promise. Perhaps it wasn't him after all. Perhaps it was her—she who was beginning to feel differently, to see differently.

And in this delicate confusion, there was also joy. A silent, almost secret joy. The joy of feeling alive again.

## Ghosts of the Past

An ordinary afternoon stretched out in the dull light of an office. Léonie's fingers glided aimlessly across the keyboard, her gaze lingering on lines she didn't really read. The world seemed to pause. And it was there, in that invisible gap of everyday life, that an image imposed itself on her. Without warning. For no reason.

The shiny tiles of a municipal swimming pool. The acrid scent of chlorine. The suspended humidity of the air, saturated with children's cries and the resonance of water. She was maybe fourteen. Maybe fifteen. A suspended, uncertain age. On the edge of the pool, a boy. Legs in the water. Silent. His gaze floating. And then this moment: their eyes met. Nothing insistent. But this gaze had left something new in her. A disturbance. A conscience.

She saw herself again, crossing her arms over her chest in an instinctive gesture, as if to protect herself from an unexpected shiver. That day, she hadn't understood. She hadn't even been able to put it into words. But a breach had opened. She now knew she was visible. And in that mirror, she had begun, timidly, to see herself.

She hadn't forgotten this scene. She had simply let it fade away, like so many others, into the fog of bygone summers. And now it was returning, with disturbing clarity. Not as a trivial memory, but as a signal. A key.

Other images flooded back. Middle school parties. The awkward slow dances, the colored lights projected onto

the walls, the shifty glances, the hesitant gestures. She saw again those timid dances, the searching hands, the tension-filled silences, the dull anticipation of a tremor. The innocence of a desire still unknown.

She then felt a wave of tenderness rise within her. An infinite tenderness for the young girl she had been. Silent, clumsy, on the threshold of so many things she had not been able to experience. A young girl who already sensed, in the trouble of a glance or the warmth of a hand, the beginnings of a barely sketched, but very real, sensuality.

These weren't memories like any other. They were traces—sensible, living—of a presence in the world that she had buried without realizing it.

And that day, in the calm of her office, Léonie understood something. There was nothing to invent, nothing to build. What she was looking for now, what Antoine had awakened, was already there. It had always been there.

## The Invisible Chains

Other memories from her childhood sometimes came back to haunt her, dark and painful fragments she had long repressed. The figure of her uncle, once familiar and reassuring, was now tinged with a menacing shadow. One day, he had crossed a line. This gesture, hidden beneath heavy silences, had broken something inside her. Since then, a tangle of fears, blockages, and confusion had gradually hampered her relationship with her own body, and even more so with her sexuality.

She had spoken about it a few years earlier to a psychologist. It was slow, painful, but necessary work. Putting words to what she had never dared to name had helped to lighten the weight a little, to untie the first knots. She had believed, for a time, that she had freed herself from it.

But as a new sensitivity began to emerge within her—like a barely perceptible tremor—she discovered that some wounds don't simply close. They linger deep within, sometimes resurfacing just when you think you're feeling better.

Desire, that still uncertain wave, gave rise to a diffuse anxiety in her. The idea of contact, of shared intimacy, awakened old echoes. It was not a conscious memory, but an alert inscribed in the body, a reflex of distrust in the face of what, for others, seemed self-evident.
She felt guilty about this ambivalence. A part of her yearned for connection, the warmth of another, the thrill of

closeness. But another, deeply wounded part, remained defensive, as if loving or being loved physically implied danger. These nascent impulses were often sabotaged from within, without her really wanting to be.

She sometimes judged herself harshly. She blamed herself for this inability to open up fully, to experience this part of herself that was nevertheless beginning to awaken. But deep down, she knew that these invisible chains cannot be broken by willpower or reason alone. They require time. And immense kindness towards oneself.

The complexity of her life as a woman lay there: a still-timid thirst for connection, constantly thwarted by the memory of a troubled past. It wasn't a simple blockage. It was a delicate alchemy between her emotional history, the sensory memory of her body, and her ability to trust—in others, but especially in herself in intimacy.

Since her encounter with Antoine, a door had opened a crack. Every new sensation, every unexpected tremor, was scrutinized with anxious vigilance. The nascent desire, instead of intoxicating her, awakened a form of guilt, as if it betrayed an old silent injunction.

The path to physical and emotional freedom remained long, winding, and fraught with pitfalls. Léonie was only just beginning to glimpse the possibility of a different relationship with her body, less subject to fear, more open to the pleasure of the senses. But the memory of the past remained there, lurking like a shadow, reminding us of the fragility of this openness.

She knew now that her healing would not be linear. It would require time, infinite gentleness toward herself, and the patient acceptance of this inner complexity—that of a still hesitant desire, shaped by the flickering light of the present and the lingering shadow of the past.

## The walls of silence

The shadow of the abuse she experienced as a teenager had spread through Léonie's life like a persistent, silent mist, infiltrating the folds of her innermost being. This ancient trauma had cracked her ability to trust, profoundly altering her relationship with herself and with others. As soon as a bond deepened, fear would arise, subterranean, bringing her back to that boundary crossed too soon, too violently.

She would have liked to feel free to love, to let herself be approached, to lay down her weapons. But the simple idea of revealing herself, of abandoning herself to the tenderness of another, aroused a visceral mistrust. She found herself sabotaging, without really meaning to, any attempt at a sincere approach. Even the most kind gestures could awaken in her an inner tension, a silent withdrawal.

Faced with this fragility, Léonie had forged a refuge in self-control. Her intelligence, her efficiency, her ability to anticipate, to organize, to excel, had made her a respected professional. This structured world allowed her to exist without putting herself in danger. In success, she had found a form of repair, a secure sense of worth, where emotion remained unstable ground.

Her appearance, soft and luminous, attracted attention. But these glances, far from pleasing her, made her uncomfortable. She never knew if they were truly seeing or only guessing at the surface. Each compliment seemed to cross an unwanted threshold. She responded gracefully, of course, but inside, she closed herself off. Again.

This paradox created a persistent loneliness within her. She hadn't chosen to cut herself off from love. It was an adaptation. A way of protecting herself, silent and profound. And yet... at the heart of this closure, something within her only asked to live. An intact part, as fine as a flame, persisted. She yearned for gentleness. For abandonment, but without vertigo. For a touch that didn't take, but that welcomed.

This tremor was still discreet. It revealed itself from time to time. A word that resonated strangely. A sensation that lasted longer than expected. It was tenuous, almost unreal. But it returned, sometimes, like music you think you know.

It was a premonition. An opening, barely ajar. But all around, fear watched. The shadow of the past stood between her and the possible. The light seemed close, but still inaccessible.

She knew that no amount of willpower would be enough. She needed a gaze that knew how to wait. A presence that didn't force anything. A space without demands.

Then perhaps his body, frozen for so long, would dare to move. A breath of fresh air. A way of inhabiting the intimate without fear.

The path would be uneven, winding. One step forward, then two steps back. But something inside her—stronger than silence, older than fear—seemed ready to be reborn. Not all at once, but in tiny fragments. And if this rebirth

were to come, it would first come in a space of gentleness, respect, and listening.

## The audacity of a journey

Summer stretched out in Paris like a held sigh. Around her, everything seemed slowed down: the burning sidewalks, the half-open shutters, the lengthened silences. And within her, a strange nostalgia. Not for a place, nor even for a memory. A nameless, diffuse absence that passed through her in waves.

Some evenings, she felt it more intensely. She stayed there, in front of the screen, scrolling through images, words, without really searching. As if her gaze hoped to encounter something she couldn't express. An elsewhere perhaps. A truth, or the echo of a lost truth.

She wasn't aware of it. She wasn't trying to understand. But deep down, there was this dull feeling that a part of her was thirsty.

That evening, it was a photograph that stopped him: a high, clear valley, enveloped in a pale golden light, between two lines of motionless mountains. A peace reigned there. Beneath them, the words: *Tantric Yoga Course – Kashmir* .

There was something there. In the simplicity of the visual. In these terms: *sacred sensuality, breath, awakening of the body* . Like a forgotten resonance, an ancient chord that we brush against without touching it.

Kashmir… She couldn't place it precisely, but the very name was dizzying: distance, silence, stripping away. As

for Tantrism, she had only a vague idea of it—nothing esoteric, only this impression of a possible link between the body and the moment, without conquest or promise. It didn't tell her what she would find, but it opened a breach. And this breach breathed.

In the following days, she walked through Paris as if her steps were already slipping elsewhere. In the Latin Quarter, a Tibetan shop attracted her. She entered almost in spite of herself. The smell of incense mingled with worn wood gave her the sensation of somewhere else contained within four walls. She stood for a long time in front of the objects, then a book, placed there as if forgotten, caught her eye. *Journey of a Parisian Woman to Lhasa.* She opened it and read a few lines. Alexandra David-Neel's simple words, precisely placed, reached her.

The words of this woman, who had crossed the boundaries of the world and of herself, touched her. There were no words, only clear descriptions, landscapes, gestures, an inhabited solitude. It awakened in Léonie an ancient desire: to leave her landmarks, not to flee them, but to hear something else.

Usually cautious, attached to what she knew, she found herself responding to this inner call. It wasn't a project of transformation, nor a new chapter to write. It was more tenuous. Something within her knew that another way of life, fairer, quieter, was waiting to be discovered.

Step by step, she organized. A flight. Simple accommodations. An email to the center. She read without

avidity, informed herself without projecting. Every gesture, every step, seemed to respond to a deep agreement.

She imagined herself in the valleys of Kashmir, in those silences suspended between two breaths. She saw the slow gestures of yoga, the pure cold of clear mornings.

Doubts sometimes surfaced. She would leave alone. She would plunge into an unknown world, without landmarks. But these questions didn't hinder her. They simply outlined the contours of the leap to come.

She packed her suitcase sparingly. A few clothes. A fine shawl. A notebook. And Alexandra's book, like a thread between two traveling femininities. What she was truly carrying couldn't be contained in any baggage: an availability, a new permeability, an absence of expectation.

The night before her departure, she sat for a long time by the window. Paris already seemed far away. The stars she watched in the familiar sky seemed like silent guides—the same ones, perhaps, that she would find again there, on the other side of the Earth.

She didn't know what this journey would reveal. She didn't expect any dramatic transformation or comfort. She went as one responds to a nameless invitation.

## The time has come

She hadn't said anything, not really. Just let a few words slip, between two silences, in the course of a conversation.

But that morning, facing Sophie, her closest friend, there was no more detour.

"Are you really leaving?"

Her voice was soft, but a little tense, as if she were holding something back. A faint worry crossed her features, resting there in the discreet crease of her brows. Léonie nodded. Her smile had the fragility of a misty morning. It wasn't a triumphant yes. More like a silent acceptance of something bigger than herself.

“Kashmir… it’s far, isn’t it?”

Far away, yes. And yet closer than anything she had ever known. Far from habits, from familiar faces, from steady footsteps on the sidewalks she no longer needed to look at to move forward.

She struggled to put this need into words. It was neither an escape nor a well-defined quest. More like a shift. A silent response to a vague call. As if a part of her, long contained, finally wanted to breathe. Not to understand. Just to feel.

“I think… I need to find myself somewhere I don’t know myself yet,” she said finally, her hands around her cup, as if to anchor her hesitation in something warm.

Sophie listened to him without answering immediately. Her gaze oscillated between tenderness and caution.

"Don't you think you're idealizing... India, Kashmir... it's not always like in the books."

Léonie knew. She had read the stories, the raw stories, not the brochures. She knew the crowded streets, the insistent stares, the sharp contrasts, the sometimes disconcerting slowness of the world there. But despite this—or perhaps because of it—a thread stretched between her and this land. Something she didn't understand, but which she no longer wanted to ignore.

"Maybe I'm idealizing..." she murmured. Then she looked up. "But what if it wasn't an illusion? What if it was... a way for me to get closer to what, in me, has never yet had the space to exist?"

The question remained unanswered. Neither heavy nor light, but alive. Who had never felt this nostalgia, this intuition that another path existed—truer, more demanding, but also more vibrant?

Léonie wondered if Sophie—or anyone else—had ever heard that call. That precise moment when the need to leave becomes stronger than the need to stay. When the fear of the unknown is swept away by the thirst for an inner elsewhere.

She had no answers. Only this dull urgency, this subtle certainty that the time had come.

She looked at Sophie. There was in her eyes that silent recognition one offers to those about to cross a threshold. Perhaps a hint of fear, yes. But also, a discreet light. As if, despite everything, she understood.

Léonie no longer expected approval.

The time had come.

## The shock of the senses, arrival in India

Landing in New Delhi was a sensory immersion of unprecedented intensity. As soon as she left the airport, Léonie was seized by the tumult. Sounds, smells, colors seemed to burst forth from everywhere at once. The city was bustling. Horns, calls, street vendors, cars, and rickshaws crossed paths in a vibrant chaos. She felt tiny, almost submerged, as if caught up in a world that never stopped. Every face she encountered told a story, every gesture had its place in this chaotic choreography. She walked slowly toward her hotel, carried by the flow of the street, still a little dazed but curious about everything.

The next day, the train taking him north prolonged this feeling of living strangeness. The carriage was full, noisy, vibrating with the rolling of the metal. The smell of hot tea, the scent of spices, the shared dishes on laps, the furtive glances, and the beautiful faces gave the journey an unexpected warmth. Through the window, the landscapes changed: fields, buffaloes, children running near the tracks. A calmer, more earthy India was slowly revealing itself.

Then there was the road to Kashmir, winding, steep, clinging to the mountainside. Inside the bus, people talked, slept, fell silent.

Léonie She no longer tried to find out where she was going. She no longer tried at all. She was there.

Just there.

Her body vibrated with fatigue and intensity. Her heart slowed. Something inside her was settling. As if, for the first time in years, she had stopped keeping her distance.

A strange peace settled within her, even within this tumult.

In her notebook, she wrote nothing. She wrote a few lines, barely any words. A formless poem, which came without meaning.

## Echoes of the world in the heart of the valley

The center was nothing spectacular. A few plain walls of pale stone, flat roofs blending into the mountain, a garden of wild herbs, and that vibrant, almost ancient silence.

A whisper rose somewhere, carried on the wind. A prayer perhaps. Or simply the gentle murmur of a world that forces nothing.

At the door, a woman was waiting for him. Small, her hair gathered in a loose bun, she offered him a " Namaste " so enveloping that it seemed to open a space within her. Her name was Devi. Her eyes shone with a calm, almost childlike joy. But what touched Léonie was the way she was there—whole, present, without contours.

They walked together along the stone paths. No grand speeches. A few simple words. Here, Devi said, one didn't come to change. One came to feel. To return to the body, to the breath. No dogma, no promises. Only a welcoming ground.

Over the course of the first few days, Léonie discovered an unexpected community. Faces from Europe, America, and Asia. All gathered there without really looking alike. A New York lawyer seeking respite from the frenetic pace of success. A Berlin yoga teacher, silent but curious to unlearn. A Japanese artist fascinated by slow movements and ancient rituals.

What struck Léonie was their openness of tone. Their words carried neither verdicts nor hidden agendas. The conversations ranged from meditation to Indian cuisine, from bodily memory to the boundaries of intimacy. Here, there was no need to justify herself or explain what she was looking for. She was simply there, like the others. No longer searching, no longer lost.

One evening, around a fire, everyone told a little of their story. A man from Australia spoke of his anxious dizziness and the strange relief he had found in slowness. A Brazilian woman spoke of the silence she had learned to impose on old injunctions, those that had clouded her relationship with tenderness.

Léonie listened. She had nothing to say, or not yet. But these voices, these fragments, awakened in her a feeling of closeness—not with their journey, but with their way of inhabiting their vulnerability without fear or emphasis. It did her good.

It wasn't a community of researchers or healers. Rather, it was a temporary constellation of existences, suspended here for a few days, sheltered from the tumult. Each came with their own gestures, their own rhythms, their own silences. And in this calm plurality, Léonie discovered that her sensuality, long relegated to the margins of her life, didn't need to be explained or transformed. It could simply be there, subtle and unthematized.

Kashmir was a silent mirror. It promised nothing. It healed nothing. It reflected.

And that reflection was enough. So that she could, finally, stand there. In what she felt. Without detour.

## The Inner Valley

Morning was breaking over the valley, bathed in light and altitude. The air was thick with the scent of pine trees and still-damp earth. The mountains, majestic and silent, watched over the verdant valley like ancient guardians.

Since her arrival, Léonie felt enveloped by an atmosphere of gentleness, made of slowness and attentive silence. A discreet, almost whispered spirituality pervaded the place.

From the very first session, the workshop organizers set the framework: respect, listening, and attention to the other. Tantric massage practices in pairs required a true presence, transparency in gesture and intention. They encouraged each person to choose their partner not by rational affinity, but by intuition, by resonance.

Léonie, a little feverish, let her gaze slide over the faces. Then she met that of a man sitting slightly apart. He had a calm, deep gaze, an almost silent gentleness. When he smiled at her, it was like a quiet certainty. His name was Rohan.

There was something grounded in his manner. A calm without rigidity. A vast space behind the words. They greeted each other, hands clasped, in a silence charged with a first inner smile.
The first few days passed, punctuated by sun salutations overlooking the mountains, meditations to the crystalline sounds of Tibetan bowls, and Ayurvedic teachings. Léonie and Rohan often found themselves together. Not because

they were looking for each other, but because they found each other. Naturally.

Then came the time for the hikes, designed to allow the pairs to discover each other outside of formal settings. They walked together, among wild rhododendrons and fresh waterfalls, attuning to the slow rhythm of the mountain. The conversations were at first simple, almost banal—the beauty of the landscapes, the clarity of the air. But little by little, a trust settled in, fluid, natural. They shared fragments of themselves, memories, barely articulated dreams.

Rohan revealed himself in small touches. A delicate attention, a gesture offered without ostentation, a gaze held without insistence. Léonie found herself watching for these signs, opening herself to this discreet presence that seemed to listen to her beyond words. Their spontaneous bursts of laughter helped lighten the silences. There was a kind of safe, welcoming space between them, where nothing seemed forced.

At the top of a plateau, they sat down. The world spread out beneath their feet, immense and calm. Rohan spoke of an ancient legend, a story of mountains that love one another without touching, separated by the valley so they could better contemplate each other. His voice mingled with the wind, the light. Léonie no longer knew if it was the story or the moment that troubled her.

Their complicity was woven like a golden thread, fine and strong. At the end of the hike, a brush of their hands caused

an unexpected shiver in Léonie, a thrill she couldn't have named. There were no more daring gestures yet, but a slow rise in intensity, a subtle harmony between bodies, gazes, and silences.

Nature had played its part. The hike that day was a sensory symphony. The sweet scent of wildflowers, the caress of the sun on her skin, the softness of the grass on which she lay for a moment… Everything seemed to vibrate with a simple, open, almost innocent sensuality.

On the way back, a gust of wind lifted the shawl on her shoulders. It brushed against the back of her neck. It was almost nothing. And yet, a wave rose up her spine, soft and vibrant. She shivered without understanding. Her body wasn't asking for anything. It was listening.

Beside her, Rohan fell silent. But in his gaze, she perceived something of agreement. He had felt it, too. Not desire in the known sense, but that nascent rustle, that discreet wave, that timid *yes* that invited itself between them.

Their complicity was a fragile foundation. Nothing had yet been said, but everything was awakening. A held breath, a silent wait. Léonie felt the call, but within her, a modesty watched. Not out of fear, but out of respect for what was being born. She wanted to keep the freshness of this thrill intact. Not to rush it.

## The breath of touch

There was a soft, almost unreal light in the room, as if day were hesitating to enter. The light-colored walls reflected the shifting reflections of the candles, and the air, saturated with jasmine and sandalwood, vibrated with a silent peace. Nothing seemed to want to disturb this suspended moment. Léonie sat cross-legged on the mattress on the floor. Opposite her was Rohan. The outside world had faded. What remained was that breath between them, that sacred slowness.

The warmed oil waited, placed in a small copper bowl. It shone faintly, like a secret barely shared. Their eyes met without insistence. They knew. Not with their heads. But with that deeper part, which recognizes without understanding.

The massage began wordlessly, like some ancient ritual rediscovered. Rohan's hands brushed against Léonie's skin with an almost disconcerting slowness. No learned gestures, no search for effect. Only a breath passing from fingers to skin, from skin to breath. Each movement seemed to respond to a keen, invisible listening.

This wasn't a massage meant to relax or soothe. It was part of a thousand-year-old tradition, that of Kashmiri tantra, where the body is seen as a temple, and touch as a silent prayer. Each gesture became an offering, without purpose, without expectation.

Beneath his fingers, Léonie's body became a living territory. Not a place to conquer, but a place to hear. Where tension resided, Rohan lingered, as if waiting for the agreement of silence. Léonie, however, remained anchored to her breath. She sought neither pleasure nor liberation. She welcomed. What rose, what passed, what remained. A shiver. A gentle warmth. An unknown vibration. She didn't escape into the sensation. She inhabited it.

Then came the moment to reverse roles. The silence between them grew even denser, as if the simple act of changing gestures called for a different quality of listening. Léonie took the oil in her hands, warmed a few drops, then placed them on Rohan's skin. She didn't know how to do it, but it didn't matter. Her hands moved, guided by something larger than herself.

She touched modestly. Slowly. Sometimes with her fingertips, sometimes with her entire palm. She discovered the texture of a body she had never seen naked, but which she felt was familiar, in its density, in its warmth. She wasn't massaging a man; she was connecting. With each movement, she felt her own breathing match Rohan's, and a space opened up, without purpose, without expectation.

There was no technique. Nothing to achieve. In what tradition sometimes called "touch without intention," Léonie discovered a free gesture, one that listened more than it gave, one that received more than it directed.

Their eyes, when they met, were searching for nothing. No fire, no tension. A quiet recognition, placed there like an offering. They were not seducing each other. They were meeting, from another place.

This moment promised nothing. It did not outline what would come next. It was not the prelude to a carnal impulse, nor the announcement of love. It was entirely contained in the moment. In this pure presence, this silent offering where breath took shape.

Léonie then felt something new: a sensuality without object, without projection. A sensuality like an inner song. Something intimate and open, infinitely simple. She had crossed a threshold, effortlessly. She had let herself be crossed. And in that inhabited touch, she had felt, perhaps for the first time, that her body could be a sanctuary. Not to be defended. To be honored.

## The silence that connects

Evening fell slowly, like a delicate veil slipping over the day. In the meditation room, candlelight cast warm reflections on the walls, and woody scents mingled with the tranquil air. The wind rustled the leaves outside, and occasionally, a creaking of wood reminded us that the night, too, had its voice.

Léonie often sat back, drawn to discreet corners, where the silence seemed even more vast. She wasn't looking to isolate herself, only to immerse herself fully in this suspended space. And yet, invariably, Rohan found an anchor point close to her. Not pressed against her. Just close enough for his presence to be perceptible, subtle, like a star on the horizon. There were no gestures exchanged, no lingering glances. But something circulated. A peace, a light vibration. As if two breaths resonated without ever mingling, respectful of their autonomy, but complicit in the invisible.

Here, there was nothing left to do. Nothing to say. Just be. And in this nakedness of the moment, a form of intimacy blossomed, even deeper than that of bodies in contact. An intimacy that came neither through touch nor through words, but through a full, inhabited, vibrant silence.

Sometimes, memories would come flooding back. The first glance shared. The hand carefully placed on a stone during a walk. The peaceful silence of a massage. Léonie welcomed these images without holding onto them, like a

reflection on water. There was no nostalgia, no projection. Just gratitude for having experienced it.

And then, at the end of the meditation, their eyes would sometimes meet. Just for a moment. A breath. No message, no intention. A simple mirror, clear and peaceful, in which each saw themselves recognized. There was no question of attachment, much less of a plan. Their bond demanded nothing. It existed by itself, in the clarity of an offered presence.

When Rohan gave her a discreet smile at the end of meditation, Léonie received it like a balm. It didn't require a response. It simply confirmed what was already there: a form of silent respect, a tenderness without possession, a complicity born of shared listening.

These meditative evenings were like pauses in time. No expectations, no conclusions. Just the feeling that their souls, beyond their bodies, had recognized each other. And that was enough.

## Shards of Freedom

They were there, around her, radiant with youth and audacity, shot through with a fire she recognized without ever having quite named it. Léonie watched them, not as one looks at a foreign world, but as one listens to new music, sometimes disconcerting, but some of whose notes touch the heart.

The center, lost in the soft light of Kashmir, seemed to have become a moving sanctuary for these souls in search of truth. Each face bore the marks of a story still being written. And yet, in their eyes, she read the same intensity as that of the ancient seekers—but without dogma, without fear, with a joyful nakedness.

There was Chloé, rebellious and laughing, the blue of her hair vibrant like a flag of freedom. She spoke of desire without detour, of relationships without chains, of her way of loving as a path of radical honesty. There was Samir, all contained gentleness, whose silences spoke louder than words. He explored his body like a refuge, a place where the mind could finally rest. And Maya, intense, unpredictable, whose dance seemed to be traversed by all the storms of the world—a living body, offered, never frozen.

Léonie listened to them. She didn't try to understand. She simply let it resonate. These words, these gestures, this refusal to be confined—they awakened something deeply familiar in her. Not nostalgia, but recognition, an ancient

memory of a desire too long silenced: that of being fully oneself, free from all expectations.

One evening, the exchanges became more intense, more heated too, in the hushed intimacy of an improvised circle after a movement workshop.

“For me, desire is a cry for life,” Maya said. “It’s reclaiming one’s body, reinhabiting it. It’s political, yes, but above all, it’s intimate.”

Chloé continued with her characteristic quiet fire: "We take off the costumes we've been made to wear. We stumble, we doubt, but we want to truly love. Without having to tick the boxes."

And Samir, in an almost invisible whisper, offered the conclusion: "When we return to the sensation, to the thrill of the moment... there is nothing more to prove. We stop telling ourselves stories, we begin to feel."

Léonie welcomed their words without defense. They didn't offend. They opened. Something inside her relaxed, softened. These young people didn't come to challenge the established order; they moved through it with grace, sometimes with rage, but always with sincerity. They weren't afraid to show themselves vulnerable, disoriented, along the way.

She didn't try to march to their pace, or adopt their words. But in their momentum, she found her own. In their

courage, she felt her own audacity awaken, gentler, perhaps, but just as true.

What she saw in this youth was a rejection of fixed boundaries, a love of life in all its forms. They were not at war with the world: they danced with it, even if it sometimes meant burning its old maps.

Then Léonie breathed more freely. Something inside her loosened. Her body, once so long contained, seemed to listen differently. Less withdrawn, more present. It was no longer a matter of understanding or imitating, but of letting that same pulse open up within her: that of a naked, sensitive freedom, on the surface of her skin.

And in this shared vibration, she felt that ages, shapes, words mattered little. What mattered was the momentum. That inner movement which, from one heart to another, simply said: *Be* .

## The late seasons of the heart

Léonie also looked at other faces, more marked by the years. She looked at them with a particular tenderness—as one looks at a calm sea after a storm. At the tantric center, generations crossed paths seamlessly.

Catherine, for example, a former literature teacher, had lived through forty years of married life. A stable union, without turmoil, which had gently gone out, like a lamp whose flame dims silently. She hadn't come looking for a new romantic beginning. What she was looking for was a space. A place where her body could take its place again, where her desire, long shrouded in silence, could express itself without justification.

—For *a long time* , she confided to Léonie as she turned a corner, *I thought all that was behind me. Menopause, the children leaving home... everything seemed closed. But here, something has reopened. A sweetness, a warmth. Not a frenzied passion, no. More like a presence that infuses itself, a late flower nourished by all the seasons already experienced.*

There was also Jean-Pierre, a widower, a former engineer, whose life had been one of logic, responsibility, and restraint. He spoke little, but every word seemed weighed, inhabited. During a sharing circle, he had said simply: " *I thought that part of me was over. But there was just rust. Underneath, it's still alive. It's not a search for pleasure. It's a broader joy. The joy of feeling that you're here, that you still exist, in the quiver of a gesture, a glance."*

These journeys, so different from those of the younger ones, touched Léonie with their depth. There was no performance here, no urgency. Just a quiet desire for truth. A slow emergence, like a fire gently rekindling from the ashes.

These women and men did not come to build an identity. They came to lay aside what had weighed on them for too long. To reclaim an inner space often forgotten, sometimes denied. Kashmir, for them, was not a land of flamboyant awakening, but a clearing opened in the dense fabric of their history.

And in these stories, Léonie found a subtle resonance. They reminded her that sensuality has no age, that it conforms to no norm. It sometimes manifests itself in a discreet shiver, an inhabited silence, a gaze finally free. Desire, understood here as a vital force, does not fade: it transforms, it matures, it waits. And sometimes, in the soft light of a late season, it blooms again with unexpected beauty.

## The Silent Sanctuary

The path rose in gentle curves, stone after stone, like a discreet breath toward the hermit's shelter. Léonie walked in silence, guided by the disciple with the peaceful smile. The mountain air carried that rare clarity that erases the chatter of the world. There was no longer any direction to follow, only this quiet, almost ritual movement toward a nameless place.

The shelter was there, nestled against the rock, humble and silent. Before him, a silhouette: the wise man. Sitting effortlessly on a worn wooden bench, his straight back hugged the rough wall. He didn't look at Léonie as one observes a visitor. He was there, simply, as a mountain looks at the sky. His gaze, clear and calm, questioned nothing, expected nothing. It enveloped.

Léonie sat down opposite him. She didn't search for words. There was no need. Her hands opened, palms facing the sky, like two forgotten chalices. The silence gradually became a space, a breath, a listening.

Slowly, the turmoil of the mind calmed. What usually formed a tumult—memories, fears, faces, impulses—unraveled. Images passed by, light, like veils: childhood, old wounds, recent awakenings. Nothing imposed itself, nothing faded. Everything floated in a soft clarity, without needing to be understood.

Then something opened up even further. An unsuspected depth. Shapes appeared, but they were not of this world.

Iridescent colors, moving symbols, patterns of another order, like a forgotten language that only the heart could hear. These were not imposed visions, but resonances. Fragments of a memory that came not from the past, but from the soul.

And then everything stopped.

In this vibrant void, a presence emerged. Neither masculine nor feminine, or perhaps both at once. It had no precise form, but it was there, intensely. A deep gentleness emanated from it, a nameless intimacy. Léonie recognized something essential in it, a familiar vibration, as if she were finally touching the original note, the one that had always sung in the background in her silence.

There was no message, no revelation. Just the obvious: what she was looking for had never been anywhere else.

Facing the motionless sage, she understood that nothing needed to be said. That the transmission came through this dense peace, this nourishing silence. Kashmir was not a destination. It had simply offered a mirror. The true initiation took place here, in the bare space of her own heart.

And Léonie felt, in the quiet depth of that moment, that the path was not leading her further, but deeper. Where there was nothing to seek, only to be.

## The whisper of the nights

The nights in Kashmir carried a strange, almost sacred density. The silence was populated by a motionless presence. Nothing truly slept. Everything seemed to watch in discreet expectation. The stones, the trees, the water itself held their breath, as if something were seeking to be born behind the veil of the visible.

Léonie surrendered to these nights as one crosses a threshold. Since her encounter with the wise man, since the long hours of listening in the hermitage, she had felt something dissolve within her: the inner chatter, the familiar contours of the self. Another attention, naked, silent, had taken its place. And in this space without demand, dreams arose.

But they weren't really dreams anymore.

They were nocturnal visions, of a different order. They carried her to places she didn't know. What emerged seemed to come from a previous world, as if the collective unconscious—that immense living memory, shaped by millions of years—were opening its doors.

These visions came. Neither frequent nor predictable. And when they did appear, they had the brute force of an archaic dream: clear, almost too precise, as if the image had been etched before he was even born.

A part of the ancestral deposit was then raised, in these very particular dreams which differed radically from

ordinary dreams. Léonie did not dream in the usual sense: she did not participate, did not project herself into it. It was simply seen. The images emerged with a striking relief, in three dimensions, with vivid colors, an almost tangible density. These were not fleeting impressions, but a direct vision, without mediation, where the observer was absent.

An ancient city emerged from the mists, a primordial forest vibrated with untouched memory, an ancient language resonated in the depths of silence. She saw the founding of a civilization, an ancient natural cataclysm, the awakening of a new collective consciousness. The transformation of humanity revealed itself not as a narrative to be understood, but as stark evidence. These visions flowed like direct readings from the great library of universal experience.

No storyline, no meaning to decipher. Just a naked revelation, like a silent impact. Something larger, older, was passing through her—and she was only letting it pass.

She wasn't an actor. Not even a dreamer. Just a presence. A peaceful, vast, background consciousness, witnessing images from another order.

These visions left an imprint on her, without emotion or narrative.

And when she woke up, a feeling persisted. As if the night had touched her with an ancient secret, one she wasn't yet ready to hear.

## The Secret Fire of the Mountain

After the group phase of the course, Léonie felt the need for a deeper retreat, a more naked silence. She seized the opportunity offered by the center: to spend a few days in a small monastery perched on the mountainside, above the valley.

Up there, everything seemed stripped down. The air was crisper, the silence denser, inhabited only by the wind and a few birdsongs. The place was nothing spectacular, but its simplicity touched a naked part of her. The days passed with a soothing regularity, punctuated by times of meditation, simple tasks, and long hours of contemplation.

Very quickly, Léonie immersed herself in this fertile austerity. Silence became a companion. The purity of gestures, the absence of words, the slowness of the hours opened up spaces within her that she had never explored. She discovered herself peaceful, almost translucent, as if her body, finally, was in harmony with the horizontality of the world.

But the night brought other movements.

In the darkness of her cell, with no one watching her, no set rhythm, other sensations emerged. A shiver. A dull warmth. A tactile memory. Images of tantric massages, the subtle awakenings of recent weeks, everything came flooding back. Her body, relaxed, began to speak again.

The contrast was striking. The harshness of the place, the harshness of the silence, seemed to intensify the body's calls. It wasn't a regression, nor a temptation. Rather, a surge. As if desire, until then held at bay by the presence of others, was finally unfolding in solitude.

At first, Léonie tried to push him away. She sought peace, control, calm. She redoubled her concentration, reciting mantras, prolonging her meditations. But the more she struggled, the more the disturbance intensified—not as a provocation, but as a matter of course.

One night, when her inner turmoil reached its peak, she no longer sought to escape. She sat on her mat, legs crossed, eyes closed. She breathed deeply. And she did what she had learned to do in all other spheres of her inner life: she welcomed.

Sensations rose—hot waves, diffuse tensions, spiraling shivers. She didn't name them. She didn't direct them. She let them be, fully, without getting lost in them. Breath became a guide, consciousness, an anchor. There was no fantasy, no script: only the naked intensity of the living body.

And then something was released. Not in a spectacular burst, but in a release, a deep relaxation, as if a spring had been found, deep in her spine, at the root of her being. A new warmth circulated—gentle, ascending, alive. She instinctively recognized this movement: it was the awakening of Kundalini energy , that dormant force at the base of the spine that tantra and meditation awaken. She

also felt, subtly, the activation of her chakras—one by one, like doors opening, silent and alive.

This inner fire, this sacred fire, did not seek to consume, but to elevate.

The following nights, she returned to this practice. Without expectation. Without purpose. Only as a way of being fully there, even in her most secret areas. A presence to oneself, an inner harmony, a listening that rejected nothing. Desire no longer came to disturb the peace: it was part of it. It became a passage, a movement of opening, a call to something higher, broader, truer.

In the harsh silence of the mountain, Léonie discovered a unity. Not an ecstatic fusion, but a gentle alignment between her body and her mind. She no longer pitted her sensuality against her spiritual quest. She no longer established a hierarchy. Everything became a path—breath, warmth, silence, desire, the awakening of subtle centers—in this stark, high place which, like the rest of Kashmir, only reflected what, within her, was seeking to awaken.

## Dance under the Moon

In the heart of Kashmir, even further than the monasteries and the beaten paths, Léonie discovered a secluded, almost secret place. There, a small group gathered around a woman with deep eyes, whose gaze seemed to penetrate forms to touch the essence. She spoke little, but each word opened a space. It was said that she perpetuated an ancient art, a path of tantric trance rooted in the most ancient traditions.

The initiation promised nothing. It didn't promise healing, nor ecstasy. It simply offered a descent. An opening. A heightened presence.

It all began with a slow preparation. Plants with earthy flavors, drawn from the Ayurvedic tradition, were carefully infused. Their action was not spectacular but subtle: perceptions shifted slightly, the body's boundaries became permeable, sounds more enveloping, the air denser. Léonie felt both settled and as if traversed by something larger. Each gesture seemed to slow down naturally, each sensation expanded.

The night chosen for the ritual coincided with a full moon. The group found themselves in an open clearing, far from any human presence. In the center, a fire had been lit, its flames dancing vividly, casting shifting shadows across the trees. The air was fresh, permeated with the scent of pine trees and still-damp earth.

In respectful silence, everyone undressed, not as if exposing themselves, but as if lightening their clothing. Léonie felt a sense of modesty at first, then something gave way: nudity here was not to be understood, it was to be inhabited. It was neither provocation nor empty ritual: it became truth.

The drum began to resonate, slowly, deeply. The first movements appeared, spontaneous, gentle, as if drawn from the body's memory. Léonie let herself be guided by the rhythm, her eyes half-closed. The ground beneath her feet was alive. The fresh air brushed her skin. She wasn't dancing to express, she was dancing to be. Each gesture was born from a breath, from listening, from an inner impulse.

As the moon rose in the sky, a trance set in. Bodies approached, moved away, brushed past each other without seeking each other out. There was no direction, no intention. Just a flow, a listening, a shared presence. The fire crackled, the shadows became shifting, unreal. Time seemed suspended, as if the world had slowed its beat.

Léonie felt a diffuse warmth slowly rising within her. It was neither desire nor expectation. Rather, it was an ancient murmur, a memory of the body awakening in the silence. The sensation spread gently, like an inner breath brushing against her contours. Each vibration seemed to connect her to something invisible, living, asking for nothing—only to be welcomed.

She was no longer separate. Neither from the earth, nor from the moon, nor from others. Her body no longer entirely belonged to her; it had become a channel, a listening ear, a welcoming space. Thought was fading. All that remained was movement, warmth, and that presence so vast it seemed to encompass the entire sky.

It was neither fusion nor loss of self. Rather, an expansion. A silent communion in which desire was transfigured into vital impulse. Nothing was to be achieved. Everything was already there.

The moon, high in the sky, watched over them like an invisible mother. It bathed the scene in a soft, unreal light, a discreet witness to a wordless night.

## The beauty of impermanence

In the heart of Kashmir, within the community that had welcomed her, Léonie discovered a practice that was both artistic and meditative, of a moving sobriety: the creation of mandalas from colored powder.

For long hours, monks and practitioners, in silent attention, deposited with infinite patience grains of pigmented powder, following complex patterns, inherited from ancient traditions.

Each mandala was born slowly, like an expanding world, made of fine lines and sacred geometries. The colors vibrated, the symbols interlocked with precision. Léonie watched, fascinated, this silent meticulousness, these calm gestures that seemed to belong to another time. The only sound was the delicate rubbing of powders and the discreet breath of murmured mantras.

One day, a practitioner invited her to join the circle. Her hands hesitated at first, clumsy handling the small copper cones that poured the powder. But little by little, carried by the surrounding calm, she found a rhythm. Her entire being focused on the outline. Her thoughts faded, absorbed by the gesture, by the nuances that took shape.

It was a meditation without words. A pure presence, where every movement became a prayer. She learned the meaning of the figures: the circle as a reflection of the universe, the square as an anchor to the four directions, the symbols as languages of the soul. Every detail vibrated

with a profound meaning, every color awakened an inner quality.

The work demanded constant vigilance. The slightest distraction, a flutter of the hand, was enough to disturb the harmony. But that was the whole path: attention, patience, commitment without expectation.

Once the mandala was completed—a silent, fragile, and sublime masterpiece—a feeling of fullness settled in. Then came the strange and solemn moment of destruction. With a slow gesture, the pigments were erased, scattered, mixed. The form faded, the beauty returned to dust.

Léonie gasped. Why undo something that had required so much attention, so much presence? She felt a wave of incomprehension, almost sadness. Then she questioned, speechless, with her eyes.

The monk, in his gentleness, replied simply: "Nothing lasts. It is the law of all things. The mandala does not exist to be kept, but to be lived. Its erasure is not a loss. It is the ultimate gesture of gratitude."

She stood for a long time before the mixed dust on the ground. The colors were there, but nothing had any form anymore. Yet she felt within her something larger, something clearer.

The mandala became a mirror of her own path. Every relationship, every emotion, every encounter: a fragile drawing in the sands of time. Everything that had

mattered, everything that had moved through her, was not lost.

It had become an offering.

## Letter to Chloe

Dear Chloe,

I am writing to you from a peaceful corner, where the sky stretches out in wide sails of azure, far from the pressing tumult of Paris that you know so well. Here, everything seems to breathe more slowly. And yet, within me, something never ceases to open, to unfold in a silence that I have often hidden from you.

There is something I need to tell you. Something sweet, fragile, essential.

Do you remember that time when I felt disconnected, as if my body had deserted the stage, as if I were nothing more than a voice without an anchor, a breath on borrowed time? Those days are over. It's not a shock, not a blazing revelation. More like a reminder, an ancient whisper, returned from very far away. Like a spring buried beneath the stones.

I can't say when it began. Perhaps it came little by little, like a slow erosion of resistance. Or perhaps it was all sleeping inside me, silently, waiting to be recognized. And now I remember.

It's not just about rediscovered sensations—even if my body, too, is awakening. It's broader. A listening has taken hold, more refined, deeper. The world enters differently. The brushing of water, the caress of a fabric, the song of

the wind on the skin—everything becomes a message. A new perception is born, silent, naked, without expectation.

And with it, something even vaster: a gaze without gaze, a consciousness that doesn't think, but sees. Dreams came—not really dreams, actually. Visions. Clear, three-dimensional, colorful. An ancient city, an archaic forest, forgotten languages, upheavals of humanity. All this seen, directly, without me. I was absent, and yet everything was perceived.

Sometimes I stay like that, just there, listening to the living vibrate in my cells. There is no longer any boundary between inside and outside. It's strange to say, Chloe, but it's as if I've never been separated.

I don't know where this is leading me. And I don't need to know. It's not a project, nor a quest. It's a presence. A vast peace. An availability.

I am writing all this to you because you have known me in my silences. Because I know that you will understand this invisible transformation, this way of being reborn without drama, slowly, within oneself.

I kiss you tenderly. And I can't wait to see you again.

Leonie

## In the breath of Shakti

Through the encounters and practices shared within the circle, Léonie gradually perceived the invisible background of what she was experiencing: an ancient framework, made of gestures, silences, teachings transmitted sparingly, but carrying a quiet fire.

What they called "trance" wasn't just another technique to master. It was a way to make oneself permeable. An invitation to let go of boundaries, to let oneself be traversed. Not to forget oneself, but to encounter oneself differently.

During the sessions, amidst deep breathing, spontaneous movement, and complete stillness, ancient words circulated. Fragments of poems, excerpts from timeless writings, words carried from mouth to mouth. It was often a question of Shakti, this vital, creative force that permeates all things. To let oneself be moved by it, they said, was to open oneself to a consciousness greater than oneself, an embodied, vibrant consciousness.

The body was not an obstacle. It was the very place of experience. A sacred space where the invisible was revealed, not without modesty. Sensuality, far from being an impulse to be controlled or repressed, became a door. A quality of attention. An art of fully inhabiting the moment.

One day, one of the oldest women in the group whispered during a talking circle:

*“ Pleasure is not to be feared. It is a breath. If you follow it without clinging to it, it shows you the way. It is not an end. It is a threshold.”*

Léonie had not forgotten these words. They had settled within her like an offering.

The freedom of each person in this circle was inalienable. Every glance, every touch, every gesture was preceded by silence, by listening. Nothing was ever expected, nothing was ever owed. The authenticity of the exchanges was born precisely from this slowness, from this respect for the inner rhythm.

Trance could be born from breath, sound, movement, silence... or from touch, if it was offered in full awareness. The shift into voluptuousness was neither a goal nor apogee, but sometimes a journey. What mattered was openness: to oneself, to the other, to what circulates beyond words.

Léonie learned to recognize touch not as gestures to be obtained or given, but as spaces for mutual listening. Exchanges of attention, energy, presence. They were not systematic. They were never banal. They happened when the body, without a plan, called for them.

Among the most significant teachings for her was that of the inner union of polarities. Each being, she was told, carries within them two breaths: the direct, clear, solar impulse; and the deep, welcoming receptivity. These are

not genres, but qualities. And to unite them within oneself is to stop looking to the exterior as a corrective.

Léonie recognized these two forces within herself. There was this determined part, the one that had pushed her to leave Paris, to step outside her constraints. A clear, focused, sometimes ardent force. And there was this other part, soft, permeable, capable of absorbing the slightest nuances of light, of sensing the world in silence. Neither was sufficient alone. But together, they formed a new framework. A shifting stability. A grounded listening.

She understood, in her body, that one without the other unbalanced the dance. Too much assertion became harshness. Too much abandonment, dissolution. What she tasted now was a reconciliation, an inner fluidity that demanded nothing, but supported everything.

This new balance didn't rule out encounters. But it anchored them differently. She no longer expected another to fill a gap. Rather, she hoped that the union, if it occurred, would be a space for sharing, for mutual radiance, where each, in their completeness, offered their light to the other.

What Léonie discovered wasn't a series of exercises or knowledge to be absorbed. It was a way to stay in the moment. A way to open the senses without losing oneself. A way to breathe with the world.

## Jyoti

Léonie's last moments in Kashmir unfolded in a gentleness tinged with serene melancholy. Something within her knew that leaving would not be a heartbreak, but a door she would calmly cross.

Léonie had returned alone to meditate by the stream. The flowing, tireless water seemed to sing an ancient memory. She had closed her eyes, letting the murmur imprint itself on her like a breath, a secret transmitted by the stones and the current. She had felt, in this simplicity, a form of blessing.

The morning of his departure, the tantric yoga instructor invited him into the small temple. The walls, adorned with brightly colored frescoes, depicted dancing deities, half-human, half-symbolic. The air was saturated with the scent of incense; the light filtering through the stained-glass windows seemed to suspend time.

He indicated a cushion in front of him. Between them, bowls filled with water, flowers, pigments. No ritual announced, no prepared speech. Just this quality of presence, dense and limpid.

He intoned a mantra. His deep voice vibrated gently, as if rising from the earth. Léonie closed her eyes. She no longer sought to understand, to grasp a meaning. She listened with her whole body, lulled by the sacred sounds.

When the singing died away, the man dipped his fingers into the water and sprinkled it gently. She felt the coolness on her forehead, her cheeks. He said simply:

— May this water remind you of the spring.
Then he let petals fall onto his open hands.

— May beauty and joy be your companions.
Finally, with the red pigment, he drew a dot in the center of his forehead.

— May the light of conscience guide your gaze.

Silence fell, full of meaning. He spoke to her gently:

— You remain Léonie. This name has carried you this far. It is part of your memory. But now, another name accompanies you.

He paused, then added:

— You are also Jyoti, Léonie. *Jyoti* means light. A light that not only shines outside, but burns within you, in the shadows and the quiet. A quiet, faithful flame, never extinguished.

Silence again. Léonie felt the words resonate deep within her, like a wave.

—This name doesn't give you a role. It simply reminds you of what you've recognized within yourself. You have

nothing to teach, nothing to prove. But wherever you go, this light may awaken other flames.

He clasped his hands and bowed his head. Léonie did the same, in a silent gesture.

She didn't know what she was going to do in Paris, nor what this "transmission" would be. There was no plan, no expectation. But she now carried an inner thread, a new coherence, woven from slowness, sensations, silences.

She stood up unhurriedly, giving thanks with a glance. She didn't feel changed, but revealed. Something inside her had been named. Not to be displayed, but to be inhabited.

She crossed the temple courtyard. The sun played on the stones, the wind danced in the leaves. The world hadn't changed. But she had. Léonie, Jyoti Léonie, walked toward the next part of the path—neither brighter nor stronger, but a little more present with each step.

## The fragile threshold of return

The last days before departure were enveloped in a serious sweetness, a quiet melancholy, and that strange tension one feels before a shift. Léonie packed her things slowly, as if to prolong the gestures, to delay the moment when it would really be necessary to leave.

India had left a lasting impression on her beyond words. Its density, its fervor, its raw tenderness. In the ashrams, the dawn chants, the simple gestures shared, she had discovered another way of inhabiting the world. Kashmir, however, had brought a different nuance: more refined, more mineral, like a mirror held up to the intimacy of body and soul. There, in that inhabited silence, something had been refined.

And now… Paris.

The name alone seemed too harsh, too straightforward. A dry, almost foreign vibration. Yet, this was where she was going. To find beloved faces, familiar streets, everyday landmarks. But also, perhaps, the traps of oblivion.

She knew that the light she had welcomed was not a state to be preserved, much less protected. It was a discreet fire, a living impulse. Yet, a fear persisted: that of seeing this fire flicker, stifled by the tumult of habits, by demands, automatisms, the noises from outside.

What she had appreciated here was not ecstasy or a quest. It was a quality of presence. She had learned to listen

without seeking, to feel without wanting. The body was no longer an instrument to be mastered, but a temple inhabited by mysteries.

Would she succeed in keeping this flame alive? Not through discipline, nor through flight, but through a living connection, a gaze open to the moment, where the sacred depended neither on mountains nor incense, but on the very choice to open one's eyes.

She thought of her loved ones, their busy lives. Their conversations, sometimes cut off from the essential. She loved them. But how could she stay close without losing herself? How could she share without betraying herself? It wasn't about convincing, much less teaching. Just about continuing to walk, to live, to love... from this larger, more anchored space.

Every gesture—folding a cloth, closing a bag, touching a stone—carried the trace of a silent goodbye. Not sadness, but a serene gravity, a keen awareness of what she was carrying with her.

She took a deep breath, closed her eyes for a moment. The incense, the colors, the faces passed through her mind without lingering. A simple sentence rose from the inner silence: *Be the light in every moment.*

## Presence in exile

Returning to Paris was a shock, an abrupt transition between two worlds. At the airport, the clamor of suitcases, the cold announcements, the hurried faces grabbed her without gentleness. Léonie, still steeped in the deep silence of the mountains, crossed like a stranger into a universe saturated with urgency.

On the subway, the city seemed unreal to her: shifty glances, empty gestures, isolation behind luminous screens. Instinctively, she offered a smile to a stranger, who lost himself in a suspicious, almost worried look. She understood then how much she carried within her a different rhythm, a shifted inner tempo.

The city seemed fast-paced, nervous, saturated. And yet, something within her remained motionless, like a silent center observing without judging. What she had experienced in Kashmir was not a hazy memory to be filed away in a drawer. Her body carried the memory of a new, slower, more accurate way of listening.

A certainty was born within her, discreet but firm: what she had discovered, this breath, this presence, could no longer be erased. It was a way of inhabiting the world, here and now, in every moment.

The real shock came from the others.

At a dinner with Sophie and Claire, her childhood friends, Léonie dared to speak in a low voice about what had

changed in her—her rediscovered sensuality, her awareness of breath, the gentleness of touch. The atmosphere grew heavy.

"Tantrism?" Claire asked suspiciously. "Isn't that a cult?"

Sophie, softer, said: — You look different… But be careful, you won't get lost in there, will you?

Léonie remained calm. She knew their fear wasn't directed at her, but at what they didn't understand. "It's not what you imagine. It's a practice of attention, a path to presence. Nothing mystical, nothing strange. Just an invitation to reconnect with the living, gently."

But her words seemed to float in the air. Their gazes betrayed worry, distrust, perhaps even a hint of envy. An invisible space had opened between them.

With her family, the break was more brutal. Her mother, frightened, spoke of sectarianism and manipulation. Her brother bombarded her with alarmist articles. Léonie felt a wall rise, a cold barrier between her and her loved ones. She chose not to fight, to respond gently but without denying what she had become.

At work, the tension was evident in innuendos, in misinterpreted glances. Her calm, her steady gaze, her newfound attentiveness seemed disturbing. Some men saw her serenity as an invitation, but they misunderstood it. Half-hearted jokes, innuendos... She understood that her body didn't speak the same language as their frozen world.

She felt neither shame nor anger. Her inner journey had made her too strong for that. But she measured the loneliness of a transformed being who returns among those who have not changed. She forgave this fear, this tension. The fear of the unknown freezes souls. And within her, a new clarity shone: she would impose nothing. She would live simply, true to what she felt.

The days slipped by. His apartment, initially too cramped, gradually became a refuge. The gray light of Paris revealed banality, but also the possibility of subtle transformation. Every object, every moment, was charged with attention.

Her body hadn't closed off. The memory of the massages, the slowness of the warm oil, the precise movements she'd learned from Rohan, remained vivid. Her breathing had become deeper, more present. She walked and breathed differently. She inhabited her body with a new tenderness.

The idea came naturally: to offer Ayurvedic massages. Not as a career change, but as an extension, an opening of what had germinated within her. In Kashmir, she had learned the gestures of this ancient tradition, at the same time as the foundations of tantric massage were awakening within her.

She created a simple and warm corner in her apartment: soft lighting, carefully chosen fabrics, carefully scented oils. Little by little, the first encounters arrived. First, relatives, intrigued, curious. In her hands, a silent voice was born, a language without words. She was there, fully present.

And this presence alone, luminous and tranquil, was enough.

## The distant echo of Kashmir

Months had passed since Léonie's return. Parisian life, with its fast pace and familiar contours, had resumed its course. Yet, within her, there remained a breach opening onto another world. A silence. A slowness. A quality of presence that nothing could erase.

Her massage business had become a matter of course, a natural extension. Her hands, now messengers of conscious touch, simply conveyed a deep respect for the living. Each encounter with others was, for her, a close listening experience, a bridge to what she had discovered there, in the subdued light of the mountains.

Sometimes, suddenly, Rohan's quiet figure would appear within her. Not a painful absence, nor a regret for unfulfilled love, but a subtle tremor—a gentle resonance slipping between two breaths.

She remembered their shared silences, the light footsteps on the paths, the whispers that escaped beneath a starry sky. There had been no burning passion, no promise, but a luminous closeness, as if their souls had recognized each other in a space outside of time, beyond words and desires.

This memory persisted, delicate and peaceful. It didn't invade her life; it accompanied her, like the scent of a flower long pressed between the pages of a book. It reminded her that intimacy could be born without expectation, without promise, in the subtle harmony of an inhabited moment.

Sometimes she found herself wondering if Rohan also retained this light and vibrant trace. But these questions remained unanswered, floating like bubbles of light in the inner silence.

Kashmir no longer called to her; it was no longer a place to return to. It lived within her like a tranquil mirror, a gentle echo in the Parisian tumult. In the often noisy solitude of the city, Léonie drew from this memory a serene strength, a deep confidence in the beauty of encounters that seek neither possession nor tomorrow.

She finally understood that some connections exist simply for what they awaken—an inner radiance, an unfettered light. The one between her and Rohan was one of those: a silent, free, unconditionally offered intimacy, whose memory lived less in the past than in the ever-renewed attention of the present.

## What remains

The seasons slipped into one another, and Léonie continued on her path, gently shaped by the discreet flow of existence. Her massage practice had been refined to the point of becoming an almost sacred space. There, her hands spoke a silent language, each gesture performed with clarity, without harshness, like a precise word that seeks neither effect nor response.

In this quiet maturity, a thread persisted, discreet but very much alive. A thread of light, stretched toward an elsewhere that no longer called, but continued to vibrate. Kashmir. Rohan. Not as an expectation, but as a clear note, suspended in the heart of his memory.

Sometimes, in the midst of a silence or in the interval between two breaths, the presence of this man reappeared, without a fuss. A reflection on the surface of calm water. Nothing to grasp, nothing to understand—just the sweetness of a living memory.

One evening, in meditation, the thought of Rohan imposed itself with an insistent gentleness. Not like a call, but like a whisper that cannot be ignored. Was he still there, in the mountains? Was he still walking in the low light of simple mornings?

Driven by a gentle impulse, she searched for him. His name, a few letters typed hesitantly. She found him without difficulty. Images appeared: familiar landscapes, peaceful gazes, traces of a life connected to the earth and

to silence. Nothing exposed. Just fragments, imbued with the same quiet sobriety she knew him to possess.

She wrote a few words, simple, almost transparent:

*"I hope you're well. I was thinking about our time in Kashmir."*

A few days later, a reply. Warm, sober, in the same tone. Rohan remembered, too. He spoke of the clear sky, the evening meditations, this precious interlude. They exchanged a little more. Nothing too much. News, traces of life. Then silence returned, naturally.

Léonie welcomed this exchange like a gentle breeze on the face. It didn't open up anything new, didn't rekindle an expectation. It only confirmed what she had already sensed: this connection had existed fully. And that was enough.

She then saw more clearly what had connected them—and what now differentiated them. Rohan pursued a path of withdrawal, of contemplation, in the simplicity of the elements. She, for her part, ventured into the meanders of human contact, of embodied desire, of consciousness in movement. Two legitimate paths, dissimilar, not opposed.

There was no sadness, no nostalgia. Rather, a quiet peace. They had met in a timeless space , recognized each other without possessing each other. And then their paths had followed their curve, each true to its nature.

Léonie knew then that some presences require neither return nor continuity. They become something else. A soft color mixed with the daylight, a discreet vibration in the air. Rohan had become that: a soft color in the palette of her existence, a resonance she didn't need to revive for it to continue to exist.

She continued on her way, attentive, curious, always moving. Strong in the knowledge that there are connections that seek neither continuation nor conclusion, only the rightness of their appearance—and the delicacy of their departure.

## Balance restored

There was a discreet light in Léonie, born of silence. Not the kind that veils, but the kind that reveals. A clarity without contours, like an inner song she no longer sought to understand. Kashmir was no longer a memory to be relived, nor a direction to follow. It had become a note in her breathing, a color placed on her skin.

Her activity had matured, become more refined. She no longer sought to understand or repair. She was simply there, present, listening for the right gesture, the necessary word, the inhabited silence. Sensuality was no longer an exploration, much less a performance. It was becoming a state. A quality of presence.

And yet, certain inner folds still murmured. Not like screams, but like held breaths. Areas within her remained apart, timid, compact. Not painful, but opaque. Old memories, from adolescence, sometimes surfaced—in a look, a restraint, a shudder.

On the advice of a friend, she met Élise, a Jungian psychoanalyst. The office, nestled on a quiet street in the Latin Quarter, had the allure of a discreet sanctuary: antique books, symbolic objects, and a cozy warmth. Élise, in her manner, offered a space without direction, without urgency. She listened without taking over. Her gaze, gentle but penetrating, invited one to deposit their thoughts without getting lost.

Léonie spoke. Slowly. In layers. She spoke of the forced silences of adolescence, the silent shame, the dissociation that had crept into her gestures. Then yoga, meditation, tantra. How they had helped, yes—but how, sometimes, they had also bypassed certain blockages.

Elise didn't interrupt. She didn't judge. She listened with a deep presence, letting the words fall back into silence without freezing them. She sometimes spoke of the Shadow. Not as an enemy to be pushed back, but as an exile to be brought back to the fire. "What we hide ends up governing us. What we look at gently calms down," she said.

As the weeks passed, Léonie's dreams became clearer, more insistent. A cave. A fire. A child. Always the same child, lurking, mute, but alive. Together, they learned to decode symbols, to weave links between images and archetypes, to give space to what had never been able to be said.

During one session, Léonie's voice trembled as she recounted a painful memory from her adolescence. Tears flowed freely down her cheeks, a long-held release. Élise didn't move. She was there. Completely. And in that gaze, there was an immense, silent yes.

After several sessions, something changed. Léonie didn't feel cured, but inhabited. A step had been taken. Not spectacular, not visible. But fundamental. She was beginning to see that her dark sides weren't mistakes to be corrected, but pieces of herself waiting to be reconnected.

Femininity took its place again, more supple, more expansive. Less an ideal to embody than a quality of being to welcome. Élise sometimes spoke of Anima, that feminine part of the soul which, in each being, seeks to unite with the living. Léonie felt that this union came neither through mastery nor effort, but through a slow laying down.

This is how she discovered the word *individuation* —not as an idea, but as an experience. The slow alchemy of a soul returning to itself. Nothing is erased. Everything is transformed. The wounds, the impulses, the folds. Everything becomes material to be woven.

Her daily life felt the effects. She no longer pitted spiritual impulse against human experience. She no longer sought to escape or transcend. She embodied. Walked. Listened. Touched. Loved. Everything became a single thread, stretched between heaven and earth.

In her gestures, in her way of loving, a new clarity had settled in. She no longer asked the other to fulfill her needs. She no longer needed to be reassured.

And in the streets of Paris, she felt a heightened presence to things. Voices, smells, movements—everything vibrated more strongly. As if the world had moved closer.

Léonie understood. The past cannot be erased.

But even more, she discovered that it is not behind us: it is here, present. Each memory that emerged was not a distant

trace, but a breakthrough in the moment, as if time were bending and revealing an unsuspected simultaneity. She felt at once the curious child, the frozen adolescent, and the woman of today, united in the same experience.

This experience shook his perception of time. Time no longer appeared as a continuous line, but as a mental invention, a way of structuring what consciousness cannot grasp in a single piece. Memory became a gateway to a dimension where everything coexists.

Despite this dawning understanding, a part of her still resisted. The memories remained charged with emotion, as if they truly belonged to the past. And yet, another part knew: this was not a return, but an overlap, a superimposition of moments.

She still hadn't put this revelation into definitive words. But a fertile doubt had taken root: the past was no longer behind her; it was there, parallel, alive.

In this confusion, a gentle evidence opened up: time was only a moving backdrop. Behind it, a vaster presence was revealed—that suspended silence that everyone has already known, those moments of eternity when everything stops, for no reason. And in this space outside of time, everything seems united in a single breath: birth, death, memories, and the present.

From this confusion sprang a transcendent beauty—not a beauty that one contemplates, but a beauty in which one

fully participates in what manifests. A clear, silent vision that illuminates the moment.

## The lonely islet as an anchor point

Despite the richness of the tantric trance evenings shared with the community she met in Kashmir and then reunited with in Paris, Léonie sometimes felt waves of loneliness wash over her. These moments of collective exploration of energy, ecstatic dances, and shared silences nourished an essential part of her being, but were not always enough to appease this more intimate, more singular need for a deep connection.

She loved letting herself be carried along by the vibrant momentum of the group, feeling her body and breath unite with those of others in a shared rhythm, in a suspension of time. This momentary dissolution of the contours of the ego, this wordless communion, awakened in her a memory of unity, a sensation of fluidity and openness. And yet, at the very heart of this shared euphoria, there remained a finer, denser aspiration: that of a personal connection, of a gaze that would recognize her beyond experience, in the continuity of a silent heart to heart.

Her Parisian friendships, as sincere as they were, sometimes seemed out of step. She loved Sophie and Claire, but she felt a distance setting in, an embarrassment in sharing the content of her experiences with them without worry or misunderstanding arising. What she was experiencing now was neither exotic nor a well-trodden path. It was a profound, inner transformation that eluded words and usual frameworks.

Even within the tantric community, despite the benevolent glances and subtle exchanges, a loneliness persisted. Not that of exclusion, but that of the individual on the path, immersed in a world where spirituality is experienced through sharing but where integration takes place in solitude. After the excitement of the trances, she welcomed the resonance of these experiences, listening to the undertow of sensations and emotions.

She learned to inhabit this solitude differently. No longer as a void to be filled, but as a space for listening, for maturation, for returning to herself. She drew from it a form of peace, a salutary slowness in the tumult of multiple connections. She understood that every true encounter emerges first from this inner harmony, from this capacity to be present to oneself.

And yet, a desire remained. Not for fusion or completeness, but for shared resonance. She dreamed of a relationship where sensuality would be only one aspect of a broader intimacy, made of transparency, deep listening, and mutual respect for silences and impulses.

She thus advanced on this ridge line, between freedom and the desire for connection, between collective immersion and creative solitude. She did not seek to fill the gap, but to recognize what, within her, called for an even more singular encounter. She no longer confused shared intensities with the depth of a lasting bond. She had learned to discern true affinities from ephemeral resonances.

Her body, her refined sensitivity, her expanded consciousness became her guides. She let the encounters emerge without forcing, open to what would come, without expectation but with availability. She now knew that true intimacy only occurs when two presences recognize each other in their vulnerability and their fullness.

So she continued on her way. The solitary island she carried within her was not a retreat, but an anchor. A silent and precious presence at the heart of the shared ocean of her experiences. Where desire becomes listening, where connection becomes offering, and where the being can flourish without losing itself.

## The Silent Fracture

To the solitude she was learning to tame was added a more diffuse tension, harder to name, but whose presence was becoming tangible. At first imperceptible, it crept into glances that lingered a little too long, into the prolonged pressure of a hand during a partner exercise, into certain compliments murmured with ambiguous warmth. Léonie, still enveloped in the clarity she had brought back from Kashmir, had at first dismissed these signs, attributing them to the natural density of the Parisian context.

But the atmosphere was changing. A small circle formed around a man of fluid elegance and assured speech—Éric. His words borrowed from the vocabulary of tantra, but seemed to divert its direction. He spoke fervently of the "union of polarities," evoking the liberation of desires as a path to the absolute. Little by little, his propositions became more carnal, his suggestions tinged with a physical intensity that unsettled several of the participants.

One evening, as he was leaving a workshop, a young woman—Chloé—approached him timidly. Her voice was low and her gestures trembling.

—He told me… that true tantra was about going all the way to feeling. That my barriers were just my mind. But me, Léonie, I… I wasn't well.

These words were enough. Léonie knew. Ambiguity was no longer a thrill. It was confusion, and perhaps manipulation. So she spoke. She gathered the members of

the circle one Sunday afternoon. The atmosphere was hushed, hands around warm cups, gazes floating. She spoke of vigilance, the need for awareness in every gesture, every breath. She reminded everyone that awakening is not the dissolution of limits, but a presence to what they reveal.

Eric, sitting back, intervened with that half-smile she knew all too well.

—You're intellectualizing too much, Léonie. The body doesn't lie. Union lived fully, that's the truth. Why always want to frame everything?

The group tensed. Some looked at their hands. Others stared at the window. An invisible line was drawn across the room.

—The tantra I share, she said calmly, is not a surrender to desire, but a crossing. It is not intensity that we seek, but a quality of presence.

In the following days, the cracks widened. The laughter faded, the looks turned cautious. A strange nervousness hung in the air. Chloe moved away, and so did others. Those who remained around Eric seemed exhilarated, as if intoxicated by a promise of emancipation that tasted of vertigo.

Then came the evening when everything changed. Eric spoke in front of everyone, his tone sharper, his posture conquering.

— Léonie, you're holding everything back. You're holding life back. We're going to continue differently.

She didn't answer. Not right away. A silent fire inhabited her. Not blazing anger, no. Something deeper. A lucidity. An old wound perhaps, touched there, in the very space she wanted to preserve.

She looked at him. For a long time. And simply nodded.

They left. Taking their own version of the sacred with them.

The silence that followed was dense. But it wasn't empty. Léonie felt a new breath inhabit her. An inner clarity. She hadn't given in. Nor had she fled. She had held on. Not in reaction, but in fidelity to what was essential.

That evening, she remained alone. She sat for a long time in the now empty room. The light was soft, almost golden. And in this solitude, she understood something fundamental: certain passages require one to be alone, not to cut oneself off from the world, but to avoid betraying oneself.

The sanctuary she had wanted to create around herself had crumbled. But the one she carried within her had just been strengthened. It no longer depended on others. It had become a breath of fresh air, an anchor, a requirement.
Léonie stood up slowly. She knew that what came next wouldn't be any simpler. But it would be fairer. From now on, she would walk with that part of herself that had just

been born: the one that sees clearly, even in the fog. The one that knows how to say no, without closing her heart.

## The Solitary Dance of Chi

The breakup within the Parisian group had left a trail of fire within her. Not a burning sensation of anger or hurt, but an energy left suspended, unused. Something within her demanded another outlet for expression. A pulse. An inner surge. Not to heal a wound, but to unfold herself in a different way.

She turned to martial arts.

Not as one enters a discipline. Rather, as one lets oneself be moved by a calling. She wasn't looking for combat, performance, or protection. She saw it as a space to strengthen her inner verticality, to encounter another facet of herself: anchoring, clarity, the right momentum. A way to honor her yang polarity, not to tame it, but to inhabit it.

She didn't train in a dojo. It was the forests, the beaches, the peaks, and the snow that welcomed her.

In the forest, she rehearsed slow, almost ceremonial katas. Each gesture responded to the breath. Each foot placed on the moss or root sought a place of rooting. Her arms sculpted the air like tracing an invisible ideogram. The ground beneath her resonated in her pelvis, the same energy center she had awakened in Kashmir, not as a memory, but as a source that had never ceased to flow.

Facing the ocean, on deserted beaches, her movements broadened. She followed the ripples of the waves, the breath of the wind, the vastness of the sky. Her gestures

became more circular, as if dancing with the elements. The sand slowed her steps, the light warmed her skin, and her chi, that silent force, seemed to rise within her like a tide. There was no spectator. No role to play. Just her, alive, unbound.

In the mountains, the body became prayer. The climb itself was a kata. Each step affirmed a presence. And when she reached the summit, breathless, she entered the form with a naked simplicity, offered to the wind and the space. The silence of the heights amplified her gestures, as if the mountain itself received their intention.

Under the snow, everything slowed down even more. The texture of the ground, the frozen air, the muffled echo of her own movements made each sequence denser, more intimate. She didn't fight the cold: she embraced it. She felt the warmth of her belly, of her heart, radiating in this silent white. An alchemy was created between effort and gentleness, the rigor of gesture and the flexibility of listening.

Little by little, a new form of sensuality emerged. Nothing exposed. Nothing to prove. Just a connection, immediate and profound, with the body expressing itself, the energy circulating, the moment unfolding. A quiet power, free from all gaze. An inner dance that sought neither the other nor a goal, but which fully embodied what she had become.

The Chi rising within her was not a force to be controlled, but a momentum to be accompanied. An invisible caress

in the hollow of the gesture, a presence that took shape in action. What Kashmir had initiated, nature and movement deepened.

## Mirrors of the intimate

Léonie's transformation did not go unnoticed. In Paris, her early friends, Sophie and Claire, observed her silences, her more measured gestures, her discreet light—like a sense of change without always being able to name it.

Sophie, the analytical spirit of the trio, always anchored in the tangible, had initially greeted the trip to Kashmir with a kind of perplexity. This detour through the paths of spirituality, this slide toward an assumed sensuality, seemed almost foreign to her. She respected Léonie's path, sometimes even admired the peace that seemed to emanate from her. But she struggled to find in this new Léonie the friend from before, the one with whom she shared reassuring certainties, clear analyses. A distance had set in, slight but real—as if Léonie had taken a step aside, a step that Sophie had not yet dared to follow. And the dissolution of the small tantric circle where they had known each other, with its rituals, its confidences, had left in her a nostalgia she dared not name.

Claire, more intuitive, more permeable, experienced Léonie's metamorphosis with a different sensitivity. She perceived the opening, the new breath that flowed through her friend. Something had been released, a softer, denser current, like an inner music that had become audible. Claire didn't envy, but she questioned herself. Her own sensuality, still timid, sometimes hampered by remnants of modesty or anxiety, seemed to want to blossom, but still stumbled over contradictory impulses. The meditations that Léonie offered online did her good—but she dreamed

of physical warmth, of a shoulder, a breath, a lingering look. What she sensed in Léonie was a way of being—free without brilliance, present without effort—that awakened in her a diffuse desire: that of reconnecting with herself.

When the three women met, around an impromptu meal or a herbal tea on a windowsill, something subtle was at play. Words flowed, sometimes clumsy, sometimes right. Silences too. Sophie asked concrete questions, trying to understand without judging. Claire floated between perceptions and emotions. And Léonie simply recounted. Not to convince, but to express what she had experienced. She didn't speak of Kashmir as a sanctuary, but as a tender mirror: an unexpected reflection of what each of us already carries within us.

These moments, much more than simple reunions, became places of deep listening. Each found material there to see herself differently. Their differences were no longer boundaries, but shifting reflections. Sophie sought solidity, Claire momentum, Léonie unity. And it was in this seemingly unstable triangulation that their bond found its truth.

There was no method, no model to follow. Just presence, naked. Just friendship, fragile and strong, capable of containing hesitations, deviations, silences.

This chapter of their bond wasn't spectacular. It wasn't recited. It was listened to. Three women, standing in their lives. Three mirrors, reflecting back to the other what she

could not yet see alone. A slow, unhurried recognition. An intimacy in motion.

## Find the thread

Antoine's message appeared on his screen like a gentle vibration from the past.

"Léonie, would you be free? I'd like to see you again. In front of Notre-Dame, Saturday at 3 p.m.?"

A few simple words, but laden with a discreet weight. An ancient voice trying to catch its breath.

She hadn't needed to think. It wasn't a decision. It was a shudder. Something that remembered itself within her, deeper than thought. That thread she thought she'd let float in the wind, without ever cutting it.

Saturday arrived with a gentle glow. Paris was awakening to the first caresses of spring, and on the square in front of Notre-Dame, the light itself seemed new. The restored cathedral raised its mystery in the clear air. Léonie stood there, open, vulnerable, but without expectation. Just present, as one is before something grand and simple.

Then he arrived.

Antoine.

He hadn't changed. Or maybe it was his gaze that saw differently. The same body, the same gestures, but shot through with a quiet modesty. He approached, and when their eyes met, silence became flesh. A touch of a smile, an embrace that was at first timid, then broader. As if the

bodies, despite the passage of time, recognized each other. Without claim. Without defense.

They walked.

Not to flee the past, but to welcome it in movement. Their steps carried them to the banks of the Seine, where the world rustles gently without ever disturbing. Between the barges, the laughter, the old stones, a space floated around them, fragile, dense. There were no words to fill. Only this complete silence.

Leonie gently broke it.

She spoke of Kashmir. Slow gestures. Thread between the fingers. Presence born of silence. Listening in the breath. That nothingness that becomes everything when you truly touch it. And of him. Always a little of him, there. Not like a wound, but like a place left vacant. An incomplete breath.

Antoine didn't answer. He simply squeezed her hand. And that gesture was enough. Everything passed through. In the warm, offered palm, in that connection silently reassumed.

They crossed the Passerelle des Arts. The padlocks on the gates gleamed in the sun—rusty promises, echoes of other tendernesses. They didn't need them. Nothing to engrave, nothing to freeze. Just this suspended moment.

Then it was the Cour Carrée, the arches, the stone, and the transparency mingled. Léonie continued to speak, in snatches. The chants in the monasteries, the silent nights, the light on the skin. And always, that fleeting thought of Antoine, like a discreet thread between the moments.

He listened to her. Not to answer. But to be there. Completely.

When they reached the Tuileries, a festival was in full swing. The bright colors, the children's shouts, the balloons in the air seemed to emerge from another world—and yet, all of this also belonged to their story. Antoine stopped near a merry-go-round. The same one from another time.

"Do you remember?"

She nodded. A wry smile, a sparkle in her eyes. They bought two tickets. They got on. And there, on the wooden horses, the world spun gently around them. Lightness restored. Nothing to do, nothing to say.

Their hands sought each other. Found each other.

Perhaps this was what it meant to find oneself again: to feel that nothing has ever completely disappeared. That certain threads never break. They stretch, thin, become almost invisible. And one day, without warning, they vibrate again. Not by will. By evidence.

Under the Parisian sky, in the circle of a childhood merry-go-round, Léonie and Antoine had found their way back to life.

## The Silent Call

Antoine had never been a noisy man. He was a discreet presence, with a clear gaze and a calm breath. By his side, Léonie had found a rare kind of space—one where one can unfold without fear, breathe without restriction, become without justification.

He had been that supple rock on which she could lean without ever feeling held down. With him, she had gradually understood that freedom is not won against another, but is discovered in the depths of just bonds. He did not hold her back. He accompanied her. He let her be.

But behind this soothing patience, Antoine also carried his silences. Not those of drama, but those of a restrained upbringing, with well-controlled gestures, where emotion was a private, almost misplaced thing. He had grown up in a world where tenderness was barely whispered, where one learned to stand up straight rather than to feel alive. Desire, in this landscape, was not celebrated but controlled, framed, reduced to a discreet thrill that one does not name.

His first intimate experiences had been hesitant, as if restrained. There was within him a thirst for abandonment, a desire for true union, but each step toward this fusion encountered an invisible barrier: the fear of revealing himself, of giving himself up without armor. The body became a place of effort rather than a space for listening.

When Léonie left for Kashmir, Antoine had first observed her departure with admiration, then with distance. This journey, this quest—he didn't know what to think of it. He respected without understanding. The universe in which she had immersed herself seemed foreign to him, almost unreal. He didn't yet see in it the reflection of a larger movement, the one that, silently, was also working within him.

In the void left by his absence, he met Sophie. Their bond was born gently, without excitement or tension, like a quiet interlude. Sophie embodied a form of accessible, intelligible love. She questioned nothing; she accompanied without shaking. It was sweet, and simple. A pause.

And yet.

Despite this quiet tenderness, something remained unresolved. Léonie, even distant, remained present in him. Not like nostalgia, but like a suspended note, an inner call. He thought of her not with regret, but with that singular sensation of an unfinished but living, vibrant bond. He sensed that their relationship was neither a matter of the past nor a project to be rediscovered, but a space to be inhabited.

When she came back, something inside him shifted immediately.

It wasn't just her gaze, broader, or her way of holding herself—more grounded, freer. It was the very energy she

exuded, this way of inhabiting her body with a full, defenseless gentleness. He was rediscovering her, fascinated, drawn to what had changed in her. And at the same time, he felt that this change echoed something he too carried, but which, until then, had not found a voice.

Their connection was almost silent. No words. Just the slow recognition of a shared space. Antoine had no words to name what was opening up inside him. He no longer sought to understand: he felt.

Their intimacy, from then on, was no longer just a coming together of bodies. It was a mutual taming, in which Antoine, at his own pace, shed his old armor. There was no teaching, no imitation. Just a presence that invited him, by the grace of example, to make himself available to himself.

Sophie then moved away. Naturally. There was no breakup or conflict. She had been a partner in an uncertain night. But the call he heard now came from another place. Not from gentleness, but from truth. Not from comfort, but from a journey.

And it was there, in this journey, that Antoine understood: to love was not to merge, nor to possess, nor even to protect oneself. To love was to let oneself be touched, in the most intimate way. It was to approach oneself through the other. To discover oneself not to please, but to be true.

It was no longer a quest.
It was a slip.

And in that shift, he finally heard the call. Not a cry. A vibration. A silent invitation.

The silent call of love.

## The intimate revealed

Léonie had seen Antoine again. Their reunion had taken place quietly, carried by the strange knowledge that nothing needed to be explained. Each had moved on. They didn't pick up where they had left off: they found themselves elsewhere, displaced, transformed.

There was a calm curiosity between them, a fresh look at each other. They discovered each other with the delicacy of those who do not seek to possess, but to feel. Léonie, this time, was no longer waiting. She hoped for nothing, protected herself from nothing. She was there, whole, offered to the moment, without plans.

Antoine, for his part, contemplated her with a form of silent gratitude. He perceived without words what had changed in her. An openness, a gentle sovereignty. He did not seek to understand. He welcomed her.

Their bodies drew closer together as one might approach a spring: respectfully, slowly. Nothing was rushed, yet everything was there. Their simple gestures seemed charged with an ancient memory. Hands meeting. Eyes holding.

The kiss, when it came, was not a rupture but a continuity. It was born from a shared silence, from a diffuse consent. Each contact was a listening, each brush a space left for the other.

Léonie lived fully, welcoming her own sensations. There was no effort, no restraint, not even surrender. Just naked presence, in its most subtle form.

The sacredness came not from a ritual, but from the gaze they cast upon each other—without expectation, without fear. Just a gaze that sees.

At that moment, Léonie no longer sought to be loved. She didn't need to be reassured. She was.

And in that being, she could love.

Even here, in this city she had believed incompatible with her depth. Even within these walls, witnesses to her ancient fears. Nothing was erased, but everything was transfigured.

## The silence behind the shapes

The lockdown in Paris had initially frozen Léonie's world. All her activities were suspended. The body, usually a space of connection , seemed to have lost its place in this suddenly sanitized world. But in this enforced stillness, something had opened up. An unexpected breath, carried by digital waves, had invited her elsewhere: towards a more internal, more refined listening.

She began by offering guided meditations to her Parisian friends. It was a way to stay connected, despite the screens. But she quickly felt the need to nourish her own quest. This is how she discovered online satsangs —these silent spaces for sharing non-duality , where teachers shared a simple, uncluttered message.

One evening, she logged into a meeting led by a man named Jérémie. His calm gaze, his quiet voice, and his unconvincing manner touched her deeply. He wasn't talking about techniques, or paths, much less about progress. He was talking about a reversal. A look toward the very source of all perception. An invitation to recognize what, within us, never changes.

He evoked the illusion of separation, this belief of being a distinct individual, when everything, in truth, rests on a single consciousness. His words did not seek to seduce; they revealed, as if they pointed out what Léonie had long sensed, without ever having articulated it.

At the end of the satsang , Jérémie opened a space for questions. Carried by a gentle impulse, Léonie spoke. Her voice, slightly trembling, rose: "How can I overcome this feeling of being separate? How can I truly feel this unity you speak of?"

Jeremiah looked at her through the screen. “This question is essential. It doesn’t call for an answer, but for listening.” He paused. “Maharshi said, ‘Rather than seeking to be one with everything, first discover who this ‘I’ is that feels separate.’ Return to the very root of the thought ‘I.’”

He explained that each thought—“I am tired,” “I am worried,” “I am Léonie”—appeared against a silent, vast background, prior to any identification. The invitation was there: not to seek a future truth, but to return again and again to this simple question: “Who am I, in truth?” Not to find an answer, but to let go of what was not.

Over the next few days, Léonie settled into this listening. Not as a discipline, but as a presence. Thoughts continued to arise. “I am a woman,” “I am a masseuse,” “I am someone who is searching.” But each time, she returned to the question: “To whom does this appear?” A subtle shift occurred. Thoughts passed like clouds; something behind them remained motionless.
Sometimes, in the silence of her apartment, a new peace appeared. Fleeting, but real. An erasure of the sense of separation. Not an ecstasy, but a naked simplicity. As if the world, suddenly, no longer needed to be grasped. She felt included, not as a role, but as a presence. A listening ear. A part of the whole.

Confinement, little by little, ceased to be an enclosure. It became a space. Like an invisible ashram, without walls, without a master, without rituals. Just an availability. The body, too, no longer needed to be transformed or understood. It was enough to inhabit it. To feel it breathe.

The question “Who am I?” ceased to be a quest. It became silence. A vast, living, nameless silence. And in this silence, Léonie finally felt that she was not separate from anything.

## Where the world no longer stands in the way

Léonie had understood a simple but profound truth: happiness was not a distant destination, but a presence in every moment, a *happy hour* lived to the fullest. It didn't matter where it was—the sacred mountains of Kashmir or the familiar tumult of Paris—what mattered was the ability to be there, fully aware, anchored in the breath of the moment.

She no longer expected anything. She no longer sought to become. Intuition, once mixed with doubt, had become pure listening. Her heart, long fragmented between impulses, wounds, and dreams, had unified into an objectless peace.

After the tipping point—that point of no return where the idea of a "separate self" dissolved into the evidence of being—she withdrew, without premeditation, to the gates of Tibet. There, in a windswept stone hermitage, she remained alone for many months. The world went on, of course. But there was no longer any separation between her and what it expressed.

She didn't meditate to achieve. She simply sat, in the silence of the body and the mountains. Time was no longer a line. Each day, each breath, was an entire world.

In Paris, her presence remained palpable. Like an imprint left in the invisible fabric of things. Antoine, above all, still carried this resonance. Something inside him had split,

opened, dilated. He didn't know how, but Léonie's question now inhabited him: *Who am I?*

He hadn't tried to understand. But sometimes, in the space between two thoughts, a strange peace appeared. An absence of lack. A joy without reason.

He had a feeling he would see Léonie again. Not necessarily in the form of a face, but like finding a spring deep within. He wasn't looking, but he knew.

Léonie, for her part, had left the hermitage for no reason. Like a bird taking flight when the air calls. She had no direction, no mission. She went where the invitation was felt: a sharing circle by a lake, a silent encounter in a Kyoto alley, a glance exchanged on a train with no destination.

Sometimes she spoke. But never to teach. Other times, she remained silent. Her presence was enough. What she said had neither method nor form. She promised nothing. She simply pointed to what is.

When questioned, she laughed softly. “There’s no one here,” she would say. And it wasn’t mystical or provocative. It was just the simple expression of a truth: the “I” was no longer a center. Just a passage. Just a name on the wind.

Léonie? It was no longer an identity. It was a breath. An echo. A dancing silhouette on the mirror of the world.

And yet, wherever she went, peace settled. Not because she wanted to heal. Not because she knew. But because she was no longer an obstacle.

She was no longer a form in the world. She was what the world appeared in.

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# The song of the moment

## *Léonie's Journey*

Léonie travels through places—Kashmir, Paris, the silent hermitage—encounters, glances, breaths.

She travels the paths, but what she is looking for is nowhere, because everything is already there, in the trembling of the moment.

*The song of the moment* is not a story to follow, nor a quest to complete.

It is a presence to be crossed.